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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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AN: DB10136-0809

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 AID-07 INR-10 EUR-12 CIAE-00 ED-00
IO-14 NSAE-00 HA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 RP-10 SP-02
SR-04 /006 U

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P 231630Z MAR 81
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4621
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME
UNMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 03611

E.O. 12065: GDS 3/24/87 (BELL, RANDOLPH H.) GR-V
TAGS: SREF, PK, AF, AU
SUBJECT: AID FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES

REF: STATE 064833

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. CONSUL. IN CAPACITY AS REFUGEE COORDINATOR, CALLED ON
AUSTRIAN MARCH 20 TO
DISCUSS AFGHAN RELIEF PER INSTRUCTIONS REPTEL. CONSUL
CITED UNHCR DATA, BUDGET FIGURES AND UFP COMMITMENTS AND
STRESSED THAT RAPID INCREASE IN REFUGEE FLOW NECESSITATES
EARLY COMMITMENTS BY DONOR NATIONS TO UNHCR AND UFP
PROGRAMS. CONSUL INQUIRED WHETHER AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT
CONTEMPLATES CONTRIBUTIONS TO THOSE TWO ORGANIZATIONS OR
BILATERAL AUSTRIAN-PAKISTANI AID ARRANGEMENTS DIRECTED
TOWARD AFGHAN REFUGEE RELIEF.

3. REPLIED THAT THE GOA IS AWARE OF UNHCR AND
UFP APPEALS BUT THAT, TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, NO AUSTRIAN CON-
TRIBUTION HAS YET BEEN PROPOSED. HE EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER,
THAT IT IS STILL SOMEWHAT EARLY TO MAKE PREDICTIONS AS TO
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WHAT GOA RESPONSE WILL BE. FOREIGN MINISTER PAHR IS NOW

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IN PAKISTAN AS PART OF AN EXTENDED ASIAN TOUR FROM WHICH HE RETURNS ON MARCH 30.

4. AUSTRIA'S LIMITED RESOURCES ARE ALREADY STRAINED BY THE RISING TIDE OF EAST EUROPEAN REFUGEES. SINCE JANUARY 1 THERE HAS BEEN A 120 PERCENT INCREASE IN ARRIVALS OF EAST EUROPEANS OVER THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR, AND THIS IS THE "OFF SEASON." HOWEVER, THE PRIVATE-INITIATIVE ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE FOR AFGHANISTAN CONTINUES TO RECEIVE FEDERAL MATCHING FUNDS. THIS MONEY HAS BEEN USED LARGELY IN A FIELD-HOSPITAL PROJECT, MAXIMIZING THE USE OF AFGHAN PERSONNEL AND CURRENTLY BENEFITTING SOME 20,000 REFUGEES IN THE PESHAWAR AREA. THE PROGRAM IS COORDINATED WITH UNHCR VIENNA AND UNHCR GENEVA.

5. NIETSCH PROMISED TO INFORM EMBASSY PROMPTLY OF ANY AUSTRIAN RESPONSE TO UNHCR AND/OR UFP APPEALS AS WELL AS OF ANY OTHER ASSISTANCE COMMITMENTS.

6. COMMENT: AUSTRIA HAS TRADITIONALLY CONCENTRATED ITS REFUGEE EFFORTS AND RESOURCES LARGELY ON THE HOMELESS AT ITS OWN FRONT DOOR -- THE EAST EUROPEANS. AT A TIME WHEN EAST EUROPEAN MIGRATION IS ACCELERATING RAPIDLY, IT SEEMS TO US UNLIKELY THAT THE GOA WILL UNDERTAKE ANY MAJOR NEW COMMITMENTS ELSEWHERE. AUSTRIAN FISCAL AND ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, HOWEVER, HAVE SPAWNED A DEMAND FOR BUDGETARY RESTRAINT NOT ENTIRELY DISSIMILAR TO THAT WHICH EXISTS IN THE U.S. STILL, THE GOA'S ASSISTANCE TO THE PRIVATE INITIATIVE DISCUSSED ABOVE, AS WELL AS PLANNED FOREIGN-MINISTER-LEVEL REPRESENTATION AT THE APRIL 9-10 GENEVA CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN REFUGEES, EVINCE
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A CONCERN FOR REFUGEE PROBLEMS WORLDWIDE THAT MAY MOTIVATE FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS. POLANSKY

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